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## REJOINDER TO PROFESSOR SUPER'S CRITICISMS.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—Allow me to express my gratitude to Professor O. B. Super for the note he has been pleased to write on the little Reader for first and second year students published by me, two years ago, under the title *Selections from Standard French Authors*.

While some of his suggestions will be very helpful, I must take issue with him on several of his "corrections" and criticisms.

*Passer condamnation* does mean "to confess judgment." It means also, in the words of Hatzfeld and Darmesteter, *renoncer à se défendre sur un point*, which the expression "not to press one's point" renders pretty well, it seems to me.

In the idiom *ne plaignant pas ma peine* the same authorities translate the verb *plaindre* by *donner à regret*, which is accurately rendered by "not regretting my work."

The vocabulary gives for *tiède* the meaning "cool," which it has, in a figurative sense: but it gives also and first 'mild,' which is here quite as satisfactory as 'warm.'

The "nonsensical" translation of "counting money" for *argent comptant* is nowhere to be found in the vocabulary. Under *argent* occurs the translation "ready money" which, I trust, is sufficient.

Professor Super adds: 'Boursault is spoken of as the author of "The Mercure Galant" and two or three other "comedies" as though the "Mercure Galant" was the name of a comedy.'

'Le Mercure Galant' is a comedy: the extract given in my 'Selections' is taken from it and it was chosen not so much on account of Boursault's prominence as on account of the entertaining illustrations it offers of some grammatical peculiarities of the French language.

In the case of Brueys and Palaprat, modernizers of the famous farce of *Maître Patelin*, it was obviously the comedy, not the authors (whose work was merely an adaptation), that warranted their introduction in a book of "Standard" texts.

As for the choice of the thirty-eight selections that compose my Reader, I confess that I did not expect to be able to satisfy the individual tastes of all my colleagues. The preface states that "many more texts equally important, by authors just as representative, might have been added if space had allowed." Corneille and Racine, Larmartine and Musset are missing, to be sure, and I regret it. As for Dumas, I am satisfied that the young American scholar will soon or late get acquainted with this "standard author." The same reason would lead me to sacrifice Sand and About to such writers as Vauvenargues and Rivarol, who hold in the estimation of connoisseurs, a higher rank than some seem to think.

I am perfectly willing to "passer condamnation" on Professor Super's criticism of my selection from Bernardin de St. Pierre. Indeed it is not characteristic, but it happened to be a short and easy anecdote for the first part of the book.

But for *Don Juan's* scene of M. Dimanche, I could not see my way clear to abandon it. The scene seems to me a masterpiece and in Molière's best vein. As for *Don Juan* itself, which Professor Super calls one of Molière's "less important plays," another critic, Jules Lemaitre, considers it an "extraordinary work." He even goes so far as to state that "there is hardly any play more interesting from one end to the other, or more pathetic in spots, or more amusing."

May I add that, while realizing better than any one else the deficiencies of this book and having tried to correct some of them, I share Professor Super's flattering opinion about its "usefulness"? I agree with him that it was a "good idea" to offer to our grown-up college boys and girls who begin French, often at the age of twenty, something besides fairy tales. It has seemed to me that short stories, scenes, or essays from Voltaire, Rousseau, Beaumarchais, P.-L. Courier, Balzac, Victor Hugo, Flaubert, Daudet, Maupassant, and Anatole France are fairly good substitutes for *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge*, *Le Chat botté*, *l'Abbé Constantin*, and even *Les trois Mousquetaires*.

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